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Sheinbaum's Victory Will Be the Downfall of Morena

Only the Working Class Can Liberate Mexico!

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Claudia Sheinbaum won the presidency by a wide margin over the right-wing opposition. The Morena party and its allies will have a supermajority in the Chamber of Deputies and will be close to having one in the Senate. However, as we warned, the pressures on Morena increasingly threaten the relative calm. On June 4, workers organized in Section 271 of the miners union went on strike against the giant ArcelorMittal, in Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán. The struggle, which continues as we go to press, seeks better profit sharing. The local Morena government is trying to reconcile the interests of both parties, which means that workers must reduce their demands. On the other hand, just a week after the elections, the elected candidate received a delegation from the U.S. government "worried" about the reforms that Morena wants to pass in the coming months. Indeed, following Sheinbaum's victory, investments have fallen and the peso has been one of the world's worst-performing currencies in the past month. Sheinbaum has sought to reassure the markets by appointing Marcelo Ebrard, from the right wing of Morena, as Secretary of Economy; he will be in charge of the renegotiation of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). The following article appeared as a leaflet on May 29, a few days before the elections.

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Everything seems to indicate that Claudia Sheinbaum will comfortably win the presidency. However, she will not be able to maintain the relative stability of the last six-year term. The great forces in Mexican society—the young, growing and dynamic working class on the one hand and the imperialist thieves on the other—will increasingly come into conflict. The international situation is increasingly unstable and any economic crisis will lead the imperialists to squeeze Mexico even more. In response, workers and peasants will fight against the conditions of exploitation and subjugation they have already endured. Morena finds itself in the middle trying to serve god and the devil, but its balancing act cannot last forever. The opposing forces are stronger than Morena and threaten to tear the party apart. Those who want to fight against imperialism, for the emancipation of Mexico, have to turn to the working class. ***No vote for Morena! There is no choice for the oppressed in these elections!***

The Mexican proletariat has grown enormously in the last 30 years through massive industrialization, first a product of globalization and now of nearshoring. This working class has enormous social power since it drives the gears of the Mexican economy and a significant part of the economy of the United States. Mexico is, for example, one of the world's leading countries in the production of automobiles and auto parts. This industry employs a million workers and the largest imperialist consortiums have plants here. Near the northern border, in the center of the country, in the Bajío region, industrial parks have sprung up explosively, generating an endless number of products. In Jalisco, Sinaloa, Sonora and Michoacán, agribusinesses flourish. Hundreds of thousands of people work in the mining and energy industries. The struggles of the Mexican proletariat for its most basic needs are necessarily aimed against the imperialists, and their victory would objectively advance the fight for the liberation of the country.

Despite the growth of the economy as well as the increase in the minimum wage and social programs under President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), nothing has fundamentally changed in the living conditions of the oppressed, and some justified discontent over widespread poverty during his six-year term can be seen. The maquiladora workers in Matamoros tried to wrest from the multinational companies some of the stratospheric profits that they extract from the blood and sweat of Mexican workers. Students at the teachers' colleges want jobs, a future, and the chance to take education to the rural masses. The

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teachers of the CNTE union want to restore the conditions they lost under neoliberal governments. And the Audi workers are fed up with the exploitation they endure at the hands of one of the most important imperialist automotive monopolies in the world. In all these cases, AMLO and his Morena party intervened to pressure, blackmail or outright repress the strikers and protesters. So as not to frighten the imperialists, ***the populists hinder the struggles and divert the revolutionary energy of the masses***. The working class is the force that can tip the scales in favor of the oppressed. To win, it is necessary to remove the dead weight that Morena represents and awaken the sleeping giant.

Populism: The Serpent That Bites Its Own Tail

What has always been the driving force behind Mexico's progress is the struggle of the workers and peasants. What has hindered progress has been the alliance of these movements with the bourgeoisie through the populists. The result of the interplay of these forces has been the alternating waves of populism and neoliberalism that have arisen in the postrevolutionary period. The 1930s were marked by the masses' impulse to try to resolve the unfinished tasks of the Mexican Revolution: national emancipation and the agrarian revolution. The uprising of the workers and peasants elevated Lázaro Cárdenas, who was then able to expropriate the oil industry from the imperialists, in addition to carrying out a massive agrarian redistribution. The problem is that one cannot lead a struggle for the liberation of Mexico in alliance with the bourgeoisie. Cárdenas wanted to keep foreign financial capital at bay, but without giving free rein to the masses. Thus, he created a corporatist structure that allowed him to maintain leadership of the struggle against imperialist capital and reaction, and to contain—and eventually pacify—the momentum of the workers. Decades of zigzagging by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) led it to undermine its own base of support, and the corporatist structure collapsed. This process culminated with the majority of the PRI going along with the imperialists in the 1980s and 1990s, as the latter imposed neoliberal reforms and pushed for greater incursions and opening up the Mexican economy for their plunder.

For three decades, attacks on the historic gains of the Mexican masses have generated uprisings and mobilizations. Once again, these waves made the populists prominent, first Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and then López Obrador. Upon coming to power, AMLO promised to reverse neoliberal measures, restore energy sovereignty and substantially improve the living standards of the poor. But these things cannot be achieved without attacking the imperialist yoke on the country—which the working class can do and has an interest in doing. AMLO, however, in six years has done nothing but vacillate, because he has a foot in both camps. That is why Morena has been an obstacle even to its own fainthearted measures to strengthen the energy industry and national agricultural production, conciliating the imperialists and respecting the USMCA to the letter. In the absence of a revolutionary struggle, the populists' contradictions will necessarily be resolved in favor of the imperialists.

The U.S. imperialists, wanting to put a stop to the decline of their liberal order, are looking for ways to strengthen themselves by further exploiting the semicolonies. These pressures will only increase and are already finding support within Morena. The party's left wing—including union bureaucrats and agrarian leaders—is fighting to regain Morena. They want to return it to its origins, fighting *chapulineo* [career-seeking politicans coming from other parties], the bureaucratization and rightward drift. But seeking to reform Morena and save it from its inevitable downfall is a trap; it feeds the illusion that Morena can be an agent for representing the interests of the oppressed. This is the main danger for the workers just when the greatest battles against the imperialists are looming. The core of the populist program is conciliation of imperialism, and this ultimately feeds reaction. The pressures of an increasingly strong and vibrant working class on the one hand and the imperialists demanding more blood and sweat from the people on the other will only become more pronounced in the Sheinbaum period. The answer is not to seek a new populist option, but to unleash the power of the working class by breaking the cycle of the rise and fall of populism once and for all. It is necessary to stop carrying the dead weight of the populists: ***unleash the power of the working class to liberate Mexico!***

What Is to Be Done?

For the proletariat to triumph, it is essential to confront what has held it back: the illusions in populism and its own treacherous union leaderships. And it will be in the heat of the struggles to advance its most basic aspirations that the break with Morena will be shown to be absolutely necessary. The working class must trust in its own liberating power.

The treacherous role of the bureaucracy and the AMLO government was clearly seen during the Audi strike. With the U.S. imperialists bogged down on several fronts and the Germans in crisis, this strike was a great opportunity to deal them a strong blow and advance the liberation of the country. A victory could have changed the balance of forces, improving the position of the working class in general. This did not happen because the SITAUDI union leadership has a perspective that is compatible with the exploitation of Mexico. They did not organize the strike to win, which means linking immediate demands with the broader need to free the country from the imperialist boot. Demoralized by their leadership's losing strategy and pressured by López Obrador, the workers accepted the bureaucracy's sellout deal. As a result, the position of the workers vis-à-vis the imperialists and the government has been weakened. The central lesson of this struggle is that victory was possible but, for that, another leadership was needed, armed with an anti-imperialist strategy in opposition to the trade-union bureaucrats and populists.

The bulk of the union leaderships have submitted to AMLO's program of conciliation and are obstacles to the struggles for the most immediate needs of the workers and the oppressed masses. The most advanced workers must begin to forge communist nuclei in the unions to challenge the leadership of these traitors. The first step is to fight for the unity of the working class and for decent conditions for the Mexican masses:

- ***100 percent increase in wages, and wages must keep pace with real inflation!***
- ***For a 30-hour workweek with no reduction in pay! Share all available work among the unemployed!***
- ***Abolish AFORES [retirement fund administrators]! For decent pensions paid by the state and the bosses!***
- ***Unionize the unorganized! One industry, one union!***
- ***For union control of health and safety conditions at work!***
- ***For a public works program under union control to build affordable, quality housing!***

This would be a starting point for developing the most basic struggles and turning them into a frontal attack against foreign and local exploiters, and moving toward the goal of defeating the bourgeoisie. ***For a workers and peasants government!***

We say to the workers, the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the youth who oppose the depredations of this system, to Morena militants who want to fight for national liberation: none of the most deeply felt desires of the people can be achieved under the leadership of Morena or any other populist force, no matter how leftist they claim to be. ***It is time to turn to the working class! For a revolutionary workers party!***